

## Dateline Mexico by Rubén Cota Meza

### World Bank proposes more genocide

*The Bank and the U.S. Agriculture Department want Mexico to stop growing food, and become a prisoner of the grain cartel.*

**T**he World Bank is seeking to force Mexico to abandon its aspiration to grow the wheat and other grains needed by its growing population. They would instead put Mexico's internal food market under the control of the six big grain cartels which dominate the world market.

In May 1989, the World Bank completed a report, made public only recently, on Mexico's agriculture. The report flatly asserts, "A growing population and the recovery of the population's income levels, will accelerate the demand for food far beyond Mexico's agricultural capacity to produce them."

In fact, Mexico is very far from "recovering the income levels" of its people, over half of whom, according to official estimates, lack the means to satisfy the most minimal food requirements.

By devoting all its resources to paying debts to the World Bank and other creditors, Mexico is simultaneously shrinking food consumption and its capacity to produce food. The agricultural budget was cut by 55.3% from 1982 to 1988. Food production per capita fell by 11.8%. Beef consumption per capita was cut from 35 pounds in 1982 to only 15 pounds in 1987.

Twenty-four million acres of arable land have fallen out of production for lack of maintenance of water and soil systems. Does the World Bank propose investing in rehabilitating these lands? No. It demands that Mexico "should resort to the international market to a greater extent to provision itself with basic grains."

The World Bank propagandizes

for greater dependency on food imports as "food security." Its report states, "This security of food imports must be accompanied by more opportunities to export meat and crops with high commercial value. . . . The Mexican government in the past has tried to resist this tendency due to the importance given to food self-sufficiency and sovereignty."

The World Bank's prescription for free trade follows from the dictates of U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter. In December 1988, Yeutter, who was then Special Trade Representative, stressed at the Montreal meeting of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), "Food security and self-sufficiency are not one and the same goal or objective. Food security is the capacity to acquire food needed when needed. In fact, in some cases, food self-sufficiency can even work against the objectives of food security."

Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari took the first step toward the World Bank's "restructuring" just after he was inaugurated on Nov. 1, 1988. He threw the agriculture secretary out of his economic cabinet, leaving World Bank sycophants. What the World Bank proposes is now already mostly in operation. The rest will come with his National Plan for Rural Modernization, to be announced Nov. 1:

1) According to the World Bank, the government used to provide so much low-interest, long-term financing to the agricultural sector, that it caused "unproductive and unprofitable" cultivation of wheat and other grains. Salinas's Banco Rural has cut off all credit for the 1989-90 fall-win-

ter planting except to those few farmers who are still considered creditworthy, and has raised interest rates.

2) The World Bank ordered that fertilizer prices be increased to international levels and then freed from price controls, with imports freely permitted. The next step is ripping apart the state fertilizer entity, Fertimex, by privatizing part and closing the rest. The bank contends that cheap fertilizer (i.e., at less than world prices) and subsidies have encouraged Mexicans to try to grow their own food, thereby violating Yeutter's thesis.

3) The bank demands that the National Seed Producers be privatized and that import of seed be freely permitted, subject only to sanitary control. Again, it argues that "subsidized seed" has made the Mexicans want to grow corn, beans, rice, and other products.

Thus, the national fertilizer and seed markets are being handed over to the grain cartel companies such as Cargill, which already control the whole U.S. seed market.

4) The World Bank report also demands rate increases for the electricity used to run water pumps and for the water provided by irrigation districts. It wants limitations on agricultural insurance coverage. According to the genocidal "experts," increases in production costs would be compensated by a relaxation of price controls on both producer and consumer goods. Prices, in turn, will be determined by international price levels. The World Bank suggests that Mexican food prices be set by reference to the Chicago commodity futures market!

By getting Mexico to stop growing its own food supply, the World Bank promotes its main objective: Reduce the population by increasing mortality rates from hunger, malnutrition, and disease.